



Racing Engineering - GP2 Valencia – Qualification Another pole position for Giorgio Pantano and Racing Engineering!

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The long awaited GP2 weekend at the new street circuit of Valencia has begun in the best possible way for Racing Engineering, with its driver Giorgio Pantano taking pole position in Qualifying, after having been fastest also in Free Practice. The good showing of the Repsol and Telefónica backed Dallaras has been supported by Javier Villa, who has obtained a place on the seventh row of the grid.



On a track new to all the teams and comprising a very complicated layout, the setup work on the cars was vital and in this area the engineers of the Spanish team have been on the ball from the start achieving a fast and reliable car from the opening moments of this morning's Free Practice. It has allowed Giorgio Pantano to finish the session at the top and with more than half a second's advantage over his closest followers, which made him the hot favourite to take the pole.



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In the half hour of qualification, Giorgio has confirmed his superiority and that of the Racing Engineering Dallara, putting it at the top of the timing list from his first attempt at a quick lap, and returning to first place, this time for good in the final part of the session, when the times were improving so for a few minutes he had been removed from first position. With this latest pole position Racing Engineering's Italian driver increases his advantage at the top of the Drivers standings having added two more points to his tally. These extra points also allow the Spanish team to cut the difference to ISport in the fight for the first position in the Team championship.



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For his part Javier Villa has also achieved some good work, placing himself in the middle of the pack in the Free practice, whilst he was getting used to the new Valencia track, he gained the fourteenth best lap time. In Qualifying, the young Spaniard was late in being able to find the required pace due to the intense traffic on the track and to several yellow flag incidents as well as a red flag stoppage but he finished the session recovering positions in the decisive final minutes to repeat the 14th place already obtained in the morning. This gives him a position on the seventh row of the grid for the Saturday Feature Race, due to start at four o'clock in the afternoon.



The Feature Race will see his team mate Giorgio Pantano start from pole position and therefore with a big chance to fight for another victory that, in view of his magnificent pace throughout the whole day, seems perfectly within his scope. This opportunity is as much down to his enormous talent as it is to the great work of the whole technical staff at Racing Engineering, which has been able to interpret, in the best way possible, the challenge that, for all the participants in the GP2 Series, has been this first experience of the spectacular Valencia Street Circuit.

Alfonso de Orleans Borbón (team principal): "A fantastic job once again from Giorgio. He has done an amazing job on a circuit which is new to everyone. A pity about Javi's little mistake on his fast lap as I am sure he could have qualified in the top ten. Congratulations to all the boys in the team for the wonderful job. I am very proud of the work they are doing."

Javier Villa (driver car 11): "We improved a lot from free practice for the qualifying. It's good that Giorgio took the pole and fastest lap this morning. I was less than 1.1 sec off, but this is a lot. I was more confident with the car and with the track in qualifying compared to free practice where there was no grip, no rubber on the track. In qualifying it was a lot better. I think I could have finished in top ten as I lost three tenths in the last corner. Qualifying could have gone a bit better, the eight tenths to Giorgio are still a big step, but I am sure I can do well tomorrow. It's not difficult to prepare the car for tomorrow and I hope for a great race and a finish in the points."

Giorgio Pantano (driver car 12): "For me it went quite well. I am on pole after fighting with Maldonado and some other drivers. After what happened in Hungary it is nice we could show we are still on top. It's good to have the pole on a street circuit like this as you can avoid the traffic at the start. To conclude I would like to say thanks to the team as they gave me a great car. The car was perfect which was difficult as no one has ever raced here before."